

COUNTRY DATA: UKRAINE*

INTRODUCTION

Ukraine was the center of the first eastern Slavic state, Kyivan Rus, which during the 10th and 11th centuries was the largest and most powerful state in Europe. Weakened by internecine quarrels and Mongol invasions, Kyivan Rus was incorporated into the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and eventually into the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. The cultural and religious legacy of Kyivan Rus laid the foundation for Ukrainian nationalism through subsequent centuries. A new Ukrainian state, the Cossack Hetmanate, was established during the mid-17th century after an uprising against the Poles. Despite continuous Muscovite pressure, the Hetmanate managed to remain autonomous for well over 100 years. During the latter part of the 18th century, most Ukrainian ethnographic territory was absorbed by the Russian Empire. Following the collapse of czarist Russia in 1917, Ukraine was able to achieve a short-lived period of independence (1917-20), but was reconquered and forced to endure a brutal Soviet rule that engineered two forced famines (1921-22 and 1932-33) in which over 8 million died. In World War II, German and Soviet armies were responsible for some 7 to 8 million more deaths. Although final independence for Ukraine was achieved in 1991 with the dissolution of the USSR, democracy and prosperity remained elusive as the legacy of state control and endemic corruption stalled efforts at economic reform, privatization, and civil liberties. A peaceful mass protest "Orange Revolution" in the closing months of 2004 forced the authorities to overturn a rigged presidential election and to allow a new internationally monitored vote that swept into power a reformist slate under Viktor Yushchenko. Subsequent internal squabbles in the Yushchenko camp allowed his rival Viktor Yanukovych to stage a comeback in parliamentary elections and become prime minister in August of 2006. An early legislative election, brought on by a political crisis in the spring of 2007, saw Yuliya Tymoshenko, as head of an "Orange" coalition, installed as a new prime minister in December 2007. Viktor Yanukovych was elected president in a February 2010 run-off election that observers assessed as meeting most international standards. The following month, the Rada approved a vote of no-confidence prompting Yuliya Tymoshenko to resign from her post as prime minister.

GEOGRAPHY

Location	Eastern Europe, bordering the Black Sea, between Poland, Romania, and Moldova in the west and Russia in the east
Area	603,550 sq km
Climate	temperate continental; Mediterranean only on the southern Crimean coast; precipitation disproportionately distributed, highest in west and north, lesser in east and southeast; winters vary from cool along the Black Sea to cold farther inland; summers are warm across the greater part of the country, hot in the south
Natural Resources	Iron ore, coal, manganese, natural gas, oil, salt, sulfur, graphite, titanium, magnesium, kaolin, nickel, mercury, timber, arable land
Total Renewable Water Resources	139.5 cu km (1997)

Freshwater Withdrawal	Total: 37.53 cu km/yr Per capita: 807 cu m/yr
Natural Hazards	Droughts, cyclones, much of the country routinely inundated during the summer monsoon season
Environment Issues	Inadequate supplies of potable water; air and water pollution; deforestation; radiation contamination in the northeast from 1986 accident at Chornobyl ⁱ Nuclear Power Plant
PEOPLE	
Population	45,700,395 (July 2010 est.)
Ethnic Groups	Ukrainian 77.8%, Russian 17.3%, Belarusian 0.6%, Moldovan 0.5%, Crimean Tatar 0.5%, Bulgarian 0.4%, Hungarian 0.3%, Romanian 0.3%, Polish 0.3%, Jewish 0.2%, other 1.8% (2001 census)
Religions	Ukrainian Orthodox - Kyiv Patriarchate 50.4%, Ukrainian Orthodox - Moscow Patriarchate 26.1%, Ukrainian Greek Catholic 8%, Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox 7.2%, Roman Catholic 2.2%, Protestant 2.2%, Jewish 0.6%, other 3.2% (2006 est.)
Languages	2 main languages: Ukrainian (official) 67%, Russian 24%, other 9% (includes small Romanian-, Polish-, and Hungarian-speaking minorities)
Literacy Rate	99.4%
Major Infectious Diseases	Highest rate of tuberculosis in Europe and Eurasia; both TB and HIV are concentrated in the southern and eastern oblasts (provinces) of the country, and TB-HIV co-infection is a growing challenge ⁱⁱ
GOVERNMENT	
Type	Republic
Independence	8/24/1991 (from the Soviet Union)
Constitution	Adopted 6/28/1996
Legal System	Based on civil law system, judicial review of legislative acts
ECONOMY	
Agricultural Products	Grain, sugar beets, sunflower seeds, vegetables; beef, milk
Industries	Coal, electric power, ferrous and nonferrous metals, machinery and transport equipment, chemicals, food processing
Import commodities	Energy, machinery and equipment, chemicals
Import Partners	Energy, machinery and equipment, chemicals

Export Commodities	Ferrous and nonferrous metals, fuel and petroleum products, chemicals, machinery and Transport equipment, food products
Export Partners	US 20.24%, Germany 12.75%, UK 8.64%, France 6.48%, Netherlands 5.9% (2009)
Per Capita GDP	\$6300 (2009 est.)
Population below poverty line	35% (2009)
Foreign Aidⁱⁱⁱ	360.1 million dollars per year
Corruption^{iv}	According to Freedom House, corruption has deep historical roots in Ukrainian society...Although the Ukrainian public is highly intolerant of corruption among high officials or 'oligarchs,' they frequently consider 'small' corruption as an integral part of the Ukrainian political and social culture. Petty corruption is still seen by ordinary citizens as a natural way to overcome bureaucratic procedures, which appear to be obstacles to economic and other activities.

***CITATIONS:** All information included above is extracted from the CIA World Factbook except where noted.

ⁱ Central Intelligence Agency: The World Factbook. Online. Available at: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/bg.html>

ⁱⁱ USAID Infectious Diseases Report. Online. Available at http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/global_health/id/tuberculosis/countries/eande/ukraine_profile.html

ⁱⁱⁱ United Nations Development Program: Human Development Report. Online. Available at: <http://hdr.undp.org/en/reports/global/hdr2009/>

^{iv} Freedom House. Online. Available at: <http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=363&year=2009&country=7563>